



Induction and Probation Policy

Author / Responsible Person	Head of HR
Ratified by	CEO
Date Ratified	May 2023
Next Review Date	September 2025
Review Cycle	2 years

CONTENTS	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. SCOPE	3
3. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	3
4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	4
5. INDUCTION	4
6. PROBATION PERIODS	5
7. COMMUNICATION AND MEETINGS DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD	5
8. PROBATIONARY REVIEWS	6
9. FACTORS AFFECTING THE LENGTH OF PROBATION	6
10. DEALING WITH UNDERPERFORMANCE OR CONCERNS DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD	7
11. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF THE PROBATIONARY REVIEWS	7
12. RIGHT OF APPEAL	9
12. NOTICE PERIODS	9
13. IRREGULARITIES DISCOVERED DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD	9
14. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	9
15. DATA PROTECTION	10
16. POLICY REVIEW	10
APPENDIX 1: THE ROLE OF BUDDY IN THE INDUCTION PROCESS	11
APPENDIX 2: THE MODEL INDUCTION CHECKLIST	13
APPENDIX 3: THE 2/3-MONTH INTERIM PROBATION REVIEW FORM TEMPLATE	16
APPENDIX 4: THE 4/6-MONTH INTERIM PROBATION REVIEW FORM TEMPLATE	17
APPENDIX 5: PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE	19

1. INTRODUCTION

Future Academies (the 'Trust') aspires to be an employer of choice in education and recognises the contribution a comprehensive induction programme has on achieving this goal. The Trust believes that positive and constructive discussions during the induction process increase the likelihood that new employees will perform their role effectively and will thrive in their employment with the Trust.

Induction and probation are run as concurrent and complementary processes at the Trust, designed to support new employees to be successful in their role and to achieve their potential.

An induction is the starting point for employees to learn about the Trust, the school they are assigned to and their new role. This will include the core work and people, systems and processes, values, and culture. It is also the starting point for long-term professional development that benefits all parties.

The probation framework is designed to ensure that induction is effective and that new employees can apply the skills necessary to carry out the role to which they have been recruited to the best of their ability and to the standards required.

This policy provides a framework for the regular discussions which line managers should have with all new team members regarding their role and workload, performance expectations and standards, conduct and attendance, the essential training to be completed and the support available to them to enable them to settle in, be successful in their role and thrive with the Trust.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all newly appointed Trust employees. The policy applies to those on permanent and fixed-term contracts, but does not apply to agency workers, contractors, or consultants.

Early Career Teachers (ECTs), who have a statutory two-year induction period, are also subject to a probation period relating to their employment with the Trust.

For employees who are appointed on a fixed-term contract, the induction will be tailored, and objectives agreed that are appropriate to the nature of the post and length of the contract. If the appointment is extended, the probation period may also be extended accordingly.

Employees who have been redeployed as part of a restructure will be placed on a four-week trial period, which is a statutory requirement. The employee will not then need to complete a further probation period.

3. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new employees across the Trust are treated in a fair and consistent way during their induction and probation period.

This policy will be applied in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Trust is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality and diversity in employment and to ensuring that its policies and

procedures do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or partnership status, maternity or pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

The policy provides a clear process to ensure the consistent, fair, and equitable treatment of all employees. The experience of new employees going through an induction and decisions made during the probation period will undergo an annual equality impact assessment. The data will be monitored, and action taken by Human Resources in individual schools, as required, to ensure that no groups or individuals with protected characteristics are unintentionally disadvantaged by this policy; that employees enjoy equal access to support and training during their probation period and that decision making is consistent and transparent. Summary data and action to be taken will be shared with the Trust's recognised trade unions.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the CEO, supported by the Head of HR, to implement this policy for newly appointed principals and senior managers.

It is the responsibility of the **principal, or relevant senior manager**, to ensure that all new employees in their school or department receive a comprehensive induction and adequate support during the first year of their employment in particular. This support may be in the form of on the job learning through colleagues, specific training, or coaching.

It is the **line manager's** responsibility to:

- role model good leadership and motivate and enable the employee to perform effectively.
- put together an induction programme for their new team member and ensure that the programme is satisfactorily completed.
- set and agree initial objectives and ensure that the employee is aware of the expectations and standards required of them.
- monitor the employee's performance and give them positive and constructive feedback.
- appoint a buddy for the new employee.
- identify any learning and development needs for the year ahead; and
- maintain records of conversations, concerns and issues arising which may have a material impact on the successful completion of their probation period.

These activities are integrated into the working day for both the manager and the employee.

It is the responsibility of **Human Resources** to:

- review and maintain this policy and the induction framework.
- provide guidance and advice to line managers as required.
- monitor the completion of the compliance training; and
- survey new starters at the Trust to elicit feedback on their experience of the recruitment and induction processes.

5. INDUCTION

A copy of this policy should be given to all new employees and discussed during their induction. The aim of the induction programme is to:

- provide new employees with the contextual and organisational information they will need to be able to perform all aspects of their role effectively.
- ensure that new employees are integrating well into their department and school.
- ensure that new employees complete all relevant modules of compliance training on topics such as health and safety, safeguarding and child protection and safer recruitment.
- facilitate good two-way communication between the line manager and their employee, enabling feedback to be shared and issues and concerns to be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- signpost new employees to relevant Trust information such as the culture, values, ethos, policies, and procedures; and
- ensure that new employees know what is expected of them, understand the process of probationary assessment, and receive the support and encouragement necessary to enable them to be successfully confirmed in their post.

It is essential that a comprehensive induction programme is devised for all teaching and support staff, both for those who are taking up their first post and those who may be very experienced but are joining the Trust for the first time. The programme should provide appropriate information, support, and advice, based on the needs and experience of the employee. The type and amount of support needed will vary. The induction checklist provides guidance on what should be covered during the induction process.

It is strongly recommended that line managers nominate an experienced colleague to act as a buddy to their new team member.

Guidance on the role of the buddy is provided at Appendix 1.

The Model Induction Checklist is provided at Appendix 2.

Line managers are expected to be vigilant and empathetic towards any employees who may be experiencing any practical or interpersonal difficulties during their probation, and should address any difficulties, as and when they arise and get help and advice from Human Resources if necessary.

6. PROBATION PERIODS

The probation periods applying to new employees are as follows:

- Six months for all support staff and senior managers (including principals and executive management)
- Four months (one term) for all teaching contracts, excluding ECT's and Principals

7. COMMUNICATION AND MEETINGS DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD

The line manager should meet regularly with their new employee throughout the probation period. The frequency of meetings will depend on the type and seniority of the role and how different the new role and responsibilities are from the employee's previous role. As a guide, line managers should expect to plan the following touch points:

- In the 1st month: weekly meetings.
- In the 2nd and 3rd months: fortnightly to monthly meetings; and
- In the 4th and 5th months: monthly meetings if the employee is making satisfactory progress, or weekly meetings if the line manager has identified difficulties.

Further guidance is available from Human Resources if needed.

8. PROBATIONARY REVIEWS

Alongside regular line management meetings with the new employee throughout their probation period, the line manager is expected to hold two formal reviews, an interim and a final review, with the new employee –

- by the end of the 3rd and 6th month in post, for support staff and principals; or
- by the end of the 2nd and 4th month in post for teachers.

The probationary reviews give the line manager the opportunity to assess the employee's performance in the role, and the quality and quantity of work they are delivering. The reviews may also include other issues relating to the employee's behaviour, conduct, attendance, and timekeeping, as appropriate.

At the interim review meeting, there should be a review of the induction process and the line manager should confirm that any compliance requirements (essential training, reading and confirmed understanding of organisational policies etc.) have been fully met and that delivery / performance objectives have been set. The line manager should also consider if additional support or training is required.

Where the interim review indicates that improvements in performance are required, the final review meeting should be used to consider the extent of any improvement made.

Appropriate management support and training will also be offered. The line manager should ensure that they keep relevant notes regarding what is discussed any actions that are taken following each meeting, this includes line management meetings.

The review meeting dates will be agreed in advance so that evidence and supporting documentation can be prepared and brought to the meetings for discussion and the employee may be represented at the meetings by their trade union representative or a work colleague.

The discussion and action points from the review meetings, including feedback on positive points as well as areas for improvement and development, will be written up on the Probationary Review Form and the employee will also be asked to record their comments.

These will be shared and agreed with the employee within five working days of the review meeting. A copy will be given to the employee and a copy submitted to Human Resources. The forms will be maintained on the employee's personal record.

The Interim Probationary Review Form Template can be found at Appendix 3 & 4.

9. FACTORS AFFECTING THE LENGTH OF PROBATION

Sickness absence is managed throughout employment using the Trust's Sickness Absence Policy. During the probation period, this will also be the case, but discretion over the action taken will be applied according to the employee's personal circumstances. The probation period may be extended if, due to sickness absence, the employee has been unable to attend work for a sufficient period of time and demonstrate their fit with the role.

Should the employee's line manager be absent during the probation period, a suitable senior leader will manage the probationary process, fully supported by Human Resources.

10. DEALING WITH UNDERPERFORMANCE OR CONCERNS DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD

It is essential that before any action is taken under this procedure, the Trust can demonstrate that a thorough induction has taken place. This includes:

- (i) making the employee aware of their precise duties and the standards required by providing a job description detailing the duties and responsibilities of the post.
- (ii) giving proper and adequate instruction and ensuring that the employee understands what is required.

In addition, there should be positive and constructive continuing supervision and an "early warning" system should exist, which ensures that employees on probation are informed at an early stage if they are not meeting the required standards of performance or conduct and are given the support and training needed to improve.

If, however, it is felt that the employee is not meeting the required standards of performance and has failed to respond to informal warnings and any support and or training that has been put in place, the line manager should notify the principal and appropriate HR member and seek guidance on next steps.

If after informal supportive intervention, underperformance or concerns remain, the line manager supported by HR should outline the concerns to the employee and document the expected performance, success criteria and support on an Action or Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). A PIP would not usually be considered earlier than the end of month 2 for teaching staff and at the end of month 3 for support staff or principals. An example PIP is included in **Appendix 5**.

Regular weekly monitoring meetings should take place so that the underperformance can be reviewed, and the employee feels supported.

The employee can be accompanied by their trade union representative or suitable work colleague to these meetings.

If towards the end of the probation period, there are concerns that the employee's performance is not at the required standard, the employee will be invited to attend their final probationary review meeting. At this meeting, the line manager will present the case so far to the principal and the principal, supported by HR will determine the most appropriate outcome.

11. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF THE PROBATIONARY REVIEWS

At the final probationary review meeting, the line manager will present their case to the principal and the principal will determine the most appropriate outcome. When arranging this meeting, the employee should be provided with 10 working days' notice of the meeting, and they should be advised that they can be accompanied by their trade union representative or suitable workplace colleague.

The possible outcomes of the meeting are that:

- *The employee has passed their probation and is confirmed in post.
- the probation period should be extended due to exceptional circumstances such as a significant period of permitted absence from work, making an assessment difficult.
- the probation period should be extended due to performance concerns not having been fully addressed, but there is a reasonable expectation that the necessary improvement can be achieved by the end of an extension to the probation period.
- the line manager believes that adjustments need to be made to the role or that the employee would be better suited to a different role within the Trust; or

- the employee should be dismissed.

***Confirmation of appointment (the principal is not required to attend this meeting)**

Where there are no concerns about the employee's performance, behaviour, or their potential to be successful in post, the line manager will send the final probationary review form to Human Resources. The employee will then receive a letter to confirm the successful completion of their probation and their appointment with the Trust.

Non-confirmation of appointment

If the employee has not met the standards of performance and behaviour expected of them by the end of the probation period, the following options may be considered, but line managers must seek advice from Human Resources before they confirm the outcome with the employee.

Option 1 - Extend the probation period by up to three months.

Unless the circumstances are exceptional, there will normally be only one extension of up to three months.

The line manager will confirm to the employee the reason for the extension and the standards or objectives that the employee is required to achieve, the length of the extension, the date on which the extension ends and the dates of any additional review meetings. The line manager will also confirm any support or training which will be provided during the extended probation period. The employee will be informed that continued failure to meet the required standards may result in dismissal.

Option 2 - Consider adaptations to the role or an alternative post elsewhere in the Trust.

During the probation period, consideration must be given as to whether an employee's poor performance may be related to the role itself, to a disability or sickness or to another reason, and whether there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to the employee's working arrangements. This may include changing the employee's duties or providing additional equipment, resources, or training.

It may also have become obvious during the probation period that the employee would be better suited to a different role, but that the individual is nevertheless valued and suitable for continuing their employment within the Trust.

In these circumstances the line manager should discuss the position with Human Resources and if they are agreeable, and a suitable position is available, the line manager should put the proposal, underlining any salary implications, to the employee. If the employee agrees to the changes or a move to the alternative post, a further or extended probation period should be agreed, and the probationary process applied accordingly.

Option 3 - Dismiss the employee.

In exceptional circumstances, and usually only after probation has been extended, or where there are serious concerns over the suitability of an employee to the role they have been appointed to, the principal may consider dismissal. In this case, advice must be taken from Human Resources *prior* to the meeting.

The employee should be provided with an outcome in writing within 5 working days of the meeting, however, the outcome will be provided as soon as possible.

12. RIGHT OF APPEAL

If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of either of their final probationary review, they have the right of appeal. They should submit a written appeal to Human Resources within 10 working days of the date of the written decision and include the reasons why they think the decision is wrong or unjust, for example:

- the Induction and Probation Policy and procedure have not been complied with and this has detrimentally affected the employee's ability to demonstrate their competence in the post.
- the standards of performance expected and / or assessment criteria applied were not reasonable; or
- the line manager's assessment of their performance was inaccurate.

All appeal hearings will be held within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal. There may need to be some flexibility during holiday periods.

The appeal will be heard by an appeal panel of senior managers; none of the panel members should have had any previous involvement in the case. The appeal panel may have an HR Advisor present.

The outcome will be confirmed in writing within five working days of the appeal. There is no further right of appeal.

13. NOTICE PERIODS

Notice periods, served by either party, are reduced to 1 month during the probation period. In the event that the Trust decides to terminate employment, the employment will end immediately, and the employee will receive pay in lieu of their contractual notice period, together with any outstanding holiday pay. If the employee has been dismissed, but the appeal is upheld, the employee will be reinstated without any loss of pay or benefits.

14. IRREGULARITIES DISCOVERED DURING THE PROBATION PERIOD

If, during the probation period, it is suspected or established that the employee does not have the qualifications, experience or knowledge that they claimed to have at the time of recruitment, or if they have failed to report a criminal charge or caution which occurred after the pre-employment checks were taken up, the matter will be discussed with the employee to establish the facts.

If the evidence suggests that the employee misrepresented their abilities in any way, the Trust will terminate the employment and may pay the employee in lieu of their contractual notice period, together with any outstanding holiday pay. An investigation which provides evidence of gross misconduct may result in summary dismissal, without notice, or pay in lieu of notice.

15. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Disciplinary and Performance Improvement policies and procedures may not apply during the probation period. If issues of conduct or poor performance arise during the probation period, the probation procedure set out in this policy will be used to address such matters.

16. DATA PROTECTION

The Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice for Staff describe how the Trust collects, processes, and stores personal information about its employees, with their consent, in accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. The Trust's Data Retention Policy outlines how long information will be retained for, and when and how the information will be destroyed.

Employees have the right to request to see the personal data held on them by the Trust and can request that information is amended or deleted at any time. Any employee requiring further details about how their personal data is processed, or wishing to make a subject access request, should refer to the Trust's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice for Staff.

17. POLICY REVIEW

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed and updated regularly in consultation with the Trust's recognised trade unions.

---END---

Appendix 1: The role of buddy in the induction process

What is a buddy?

A buddy provides informal guidance and support to new employees on the culture and social norms of the team and school.

Typical tasks assigned to a buddy might include:

- showing the new employee around the office, school, and local area.
- explaining the facilities and services available to staff.
- accompanying the employee to lunch on their first day; and
- introducing the employee to colleagues that they might not come into contact with as part of their role, but who they are likely to meet around the office.

A buddy should not tackle issues relating to the employee's appointment and contract or arrangements or practices which a senior manager may have introduced or agreed e.g. protocols around hybrid working or attending personal appointments during working hours.

The buddy should be made aware that they should refer any serious pastoral or welfare issues relating to the new employee's role to the line manager in the first instance.

If the buddy works in the same team as the employee, it may be that they deliver some sessions of role-related training. If so, this should be clearly indicated as training in the employee's induction programme.

Why have a buddy?

A well-briefed and enthusiastic buddy can help the new employee to feel welcomed and will allay some of the nerves that accompany a new job.

Use of the buddy system should provide the new employee with an informal support and social network and a starting point for general queries.

Although it is not expected that the buddy will be able to answer all the new employee's questions, use of the system will encourage communication and prevent feelings of isolation. In turn, the system gives the buddy an opportunity to develop their skills in communication and the opportunity to share the benefits of their experience.

Who is best placed to be a buddy?

A buddy is usually an experienced employee on the same or similar grade as the new employee, preferably in a similar type of role.

They should ideally be in the same team or department as the new employee, though in the case of small departments, this may not necessarily be the case.

When should I organise this?

A buddy should be assigned before the new employee's start date and should be briefed on their responsibilities and the boundaries of those responsibilities. Although the role of the buddy mainly comes into play during the first few weeks of employment, it is a relationship that can exist throughout the employee's employment and should not be time limited.

It is important that the prospective buddy's line manager is approached prior to the confirmation of the role, and that the line manager is happy for the prospective buddy to devote some of their working time to the role.

Where should the buddy be located?

The buddy should work in fairly close physical proximity to the employee. The new employee and their buddy should be allowed the space and time to meet in private as and when necessary.

Appendix 2: The Model Induction Checklist

(This checklist should be adapted to meet the requirements of the specific post and post holder)

Employee _____ **Start Date** _____


Name of Induction Coordinator _____

Induction Element	Tick on completion	Notes
Day One		
Meet Induction Co-ordinator / Line Manager		
Introduction to Senior Leadership Team / key personnel		
Introduction to Buddy / Mentor		
Tour work area & introduction to work colleagues		
Issuing of (as applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network Logins Email login ID Badge Keys Induction pack Phone Lap top Uniform 		
Location of facilities – toilets, staff room, staff work room etc.		
Hours of work / Work pattern		
Arrangements for breaks and lunch – if applicable		
Telephone System (if applicable)		
ICT and Resources familiarisation		
Health and Safety aspects relating to individual's work environment		
Week 1		
Planned meetings with key people (Line Manager / Buddy /Mentor)		
Personal programme and planned introduction to duties of post - agreed with the Induction Co-ordinator / Line Manager		

Induction Element	Tick on completion	Notes
Meet with Line Manager at the end of the first week, review progress and agree training and development needs (1 st phase of probation)		
Month 1 & 2		
Meet regularly with Line Manager to review progress. Agree action plan to deal with outstanding items and training needs. Schedule in a date for the 2/3-month review		
Month 3		
Undertake the 2/3-month review. Organise training and support. Continue to meet with member of staff regularly		
Month 4 & 5		
Continue to meet with member of staff regularly. Schedule a date for 4 /6-month review		
Policies and Procedures	Tick on Completion	Notes
Policy and procedures relating to Safeguarding Children and Child Protection This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of designated safeguarding officer and safeguarding team. • Code of Conduct 		
Policy and procedures relating to Data Protection. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision or reference to the Data Protection Policy. • Information and training in relation to the employee's responsibilities. 		
Health and Safety. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of or reference to the location of the school policy. • Information and training in relation to the employee's responsibilities. 		
Fire and emergency procedures: This will include, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fire evacuation procedure and means of escape, • fire assembly points, • times of fire alarm sounder tests • any other relevant information. • Further training may be necessary depending upon the responsibilities of the post holder 		
First Aid This will include:		


Induction Element	Tick on completion	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • location of first aid provisions, • location of notices bearing details of qualified First Aiders, • means of obtaining first aid assistance, • any other relevant information. • Policy on providing first aid for pupils. • Further training may be necessary depending upon the responsibilities of the post holder 		
Policy and procedures relating to Sickness absence		
Policy and procedures relating to Additional Leave		
Policy and procedures relating to Probation/ Appraisal/Performance Management		
Induction Programme complete (a copy will be kept on file)		
Signed: (Employee)	date:	
Signed: (Induction Coordinator)	date:	
Comments	Action to be taken.	

Appendix 3: The 2/3-month Interim Probation Review Form Template

 <p>FUTURE ACADEMIES LIBERTAS PER CULTUM</p>	2/3 (DELETE AS APPROPRIATE) Month Interim Probationary Review (to be completed by Line Manager in discussion with the employee)
	Name:
<p><u>Section A: Performance</u> Summarise the employee’s performance and progress during the first 2/3 months of the probationary period against the requirements set out in the attached Job description. Take into consideration and comment on; conduct, punctuality, time keeping and attendance.</p>	
<p><u>SECTION B: Objectives</u> In discussion with the employee, the line manager should identify specific objectives, areas of improvement, training, and support. These will be reviewed regularly throughout the probation period and then finally at the final probationary review meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. <p><u>Training and Support</u></p>	
<p><u>SECTION C: Mandatory Training</u></p> <p>Has employee completed their mandatory training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection and Safeguarding • Prevent Duty • Health and Safety Awareness • Fire Safety Awareness • Cyber Security Awareness • Data Protection Awareness • Equality and Diversity • Trafficking and Modern Slavery awareness • Safer Recruitment * <p>*Only required if making recruitment decisions</p>	<p>Date completed.</p>

The employee may provide any comments about their experience of the probationary process here.	
Is the employee making satisfactory progress	YES / NO (seek guidance from HR – A PIP may be necessary)
Date of review meeting	
Employee’s signature:	
Line Manager’s signature:	
Date:	

Appendix 4: The 4/6-month Final Probation Review Form Template

	4/6 (DELETE AS APPROPRIATE) Month Probationary Review (To be completed by Line Manager in discussion with the employee)	
	Name:	
Section A: Performance Summarise the employee's performance and progress during the probationary period against the requirements set out in the attached Job description. Take into consideration and comment on; conduct, punctuality, time keeping and attendance.		
Are you satisfied that the employee has successfully passed their probation?	YES (if yes please move on to section B) / NO	
If NO , please seek guidance from HR. A final decision meeting will need to be arranged. The line manager should defer to the PIP that is in place.		
SECTION B: Objectives The line manager should identify specific objectives for the employee These will be reviewed at the next performance review meeting. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 		
The employee may provide any comments about their experience of the probationary process here.		
Probationary period successful	Yes	
Employee's signature:		
Manager's signature:		
Date:		

Appendix 5:

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

This is a template form only and can be changed as necessary to reflect the circumstances/needs of the individual case.

During the period of the PIP the employee will be monitored to assess if appropriate improvement is being made. If the expected outcomes are not achieved/improvements attained more formal action may be initiated under the relevant procedure.

Name of employee	
Job title	
Department	
Date of Initial Meeting	
Name(s) of other attendee(s)	

Date of meeting	Outcomes & Improvement Required:	Success criteria	Evidence	Support & Training (i.e. what needs to be in place to support outcomes)	Review date
1				<i>No Dependencies Manager to review weekly</i>	
2					
3					